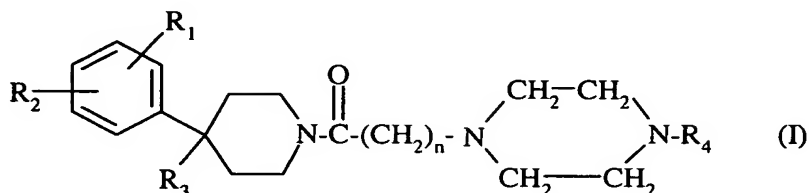


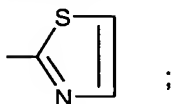
**Amendments to the Claims:**

Claim 1. (Currently amended): ~~Compound of the~~ A compound of formula (I):



in which:

- n is 1 or 2;
- R<sub>1</sub> represents a halogen atom; a trifluoromethyl radical; a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl; a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkoxy; or a trifluoromethoxy radical;
- R<sub>2</sub> represents a hydrogen atom or a halogen atom;
- R<sub>3</sub> represents a hydrogen atom; a group -OR<sub>5</sub>; a group -CH<sub>2</sub>OR<sub>5</sub>; a group -NR<sub>6</sub>R<sub>7</sub>; a group -NR<sub>8</sub>COR<sub>9</sub>; a group -NR<sub>8</sub>CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>; a group -CH<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>12</sub>R<sub>13</sub>; a group -CH<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>8</sub>CONR<sub>14</sub>R<sub>15</sub>; a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkoxycarbonyl; or a group -CONR<sub>16</sub>R<sub>17</sub>;
- or else R<sub>3</sub> constitutes a double bond between the carbon atom to which it is attached and the adjacent carbon atom of the piperidine ring;
- R<sub>4</sub> represents the aromatic group 1,3-thiazol-2-yl of formula:



- R<sub>5</sub> represents a hydrogen atom; a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl; or a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkylcarbonyl;
- R<sub>6</sub> and R<sub>7</sub> represent each independently a hydrogen atom or a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl;
- R<sub>8</sub> represents a hydrogen atom or a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl;
- R<sub>9</sub> represents a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl or a group -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>-NR<sub>6</sub>R<sub>7</sub>;
- m is 1, 2 or 3;
- R<sub>10</sub> and R<sub>11</sub> represent each independently a hydrogen atom or a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl;
- ~~R<sub>12</sub> and R<sub>13</sub> represent each independently~~ represents a hydrogen atom or a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>5</sub>)alkyl;
- ~~R<sub>13</sub> may also represent~~ represents a hydrogen atom, a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>5</sub>)alkyl, a group -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>q</sub>-OH or a group -(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>q</sub>-S-CH<sub>3</sub>;
- or else R<sub>12</sub> and R<sub>13</sub>, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, constitute a

heterocycle selected from aziridine, azetidine, pyrrolidine, piperidine and morpholine;

- q is 2 or 3;

- R<sub>14</sub> and R<sub>15</sub> represent each independently a hydrogen atom or a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl;

- R<sub>16</sub> ~~and R<sub>17</sub> represent each independently~~ represents a hydrogen atom or a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl;

R<sub>17</sub> ~~may also represent~~ represents a hydrogen atom, a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl or a group

-(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>q</sub>-NR<sub>6</sub>R<sub>7</sub>;

- or else R<sub>16</sub> and R<sub>17</sub>, together with the nitrogen atom to which they are attached, constitute a heterocycle selected from azetidine, pyrrolidine, piperidine, morpholine and piperazine which is unsubstituted or substituted in position 4 by a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl;

~~in the form of a base or an~~ acid addition salt ~~with an acid, or in the form of a hydrate or solvate~~ thereof.

Claim 2. (Currently amended): ~~Compound of formula (I)~~ A compound according to ~~Claim 1, characterized in that~~ Claim 1 wherein:

- n is 1;

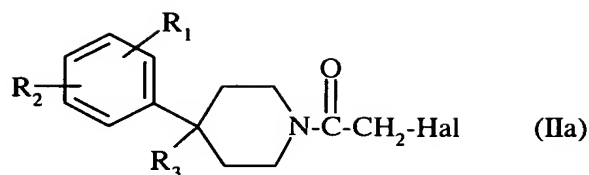
- R<sub>1</sub> is in position 3 of the phenyl and represents a trifluoromethyl radical, a methyl, a methoxy or a trifluoromethoxy radical and R<sub>2</sub> represents a hydrogen atom; or else R<sub>1</sub> is in position 3 of the phenyl and represents a trifluoromethyl radical and R<sub>2</sub> is in position 4 of the phenyl and represents a chlorine atom; and

- R<sub>3</sub> represents a hydroxyl, a methoxy, an aminomethyl, a (methylamino)methyl, or a (dimethylamino)methyl; or else R<sub>3</sub> constitutes a double bond between the carbon atom to which it is attached and the adjacent carbon atom of the piperidine ring;

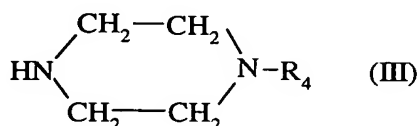
- R<sub>4</sub> represents a 1,3-thiazol-2-yl;

~~in the form of a base or an addition salt with an acid, and also in the form of a hydrate or solvate.~~

Claim 3. (Currently amended): ~~Process for preparing compounds of formula (I)~~ A process for preparing a compound according to Claim 1 ~~in which n = 1, characterized in that:~~  
a1) wherein a compound of formula (IIa)



in which  $R_1$ ,  $R_2$  and  $R_3$  are as defined for a compound of formula (I) in Claim 1 and Hal represents a halogen atom, preferably chlorine or bromine, with the proviso that when  $R_3$  contains a hydroxyl or amine function these functions may be protected, is reacted with a compound of formula (III)



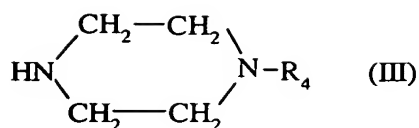
in which  $R_4$  is as defined for a compound of formula (I) in Claim 1;

b1) and, after and deprotection of the hydroxyl or amine functions present in  $R_3$  where appropriate, the compound of formula (I) is obtained.

Claim 4. (Currently amended): ~~Process for preparing compounds of formula (I)~~ A process for preparing a compound according to Claim 1 in which  $n = 2$ , ~~characterized in that:~~  
a2) wherein a compound of formula (IIb)



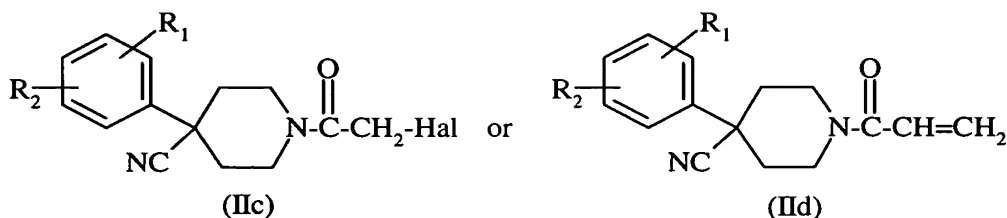
in which  $R_1$ ,  $R_2$  and  $R_3$  are as defined for a compound of formula (I) in Claim 1, with the proviso that when  $R_3$  contains a hydroxyl or amine function these functions may be protected, is reacted with a compound of formula (III)



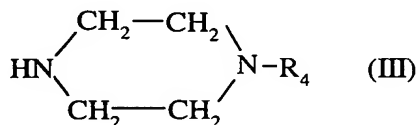
in which  $\text{R}_4$  is as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I) in Claim 1;~~

~~b2) and, after and~~ deprotection of the hydroxyl or amine functions present in  $\text{R}_3$  where appropriate, ~~the compound of formula (I) is obtained.~~

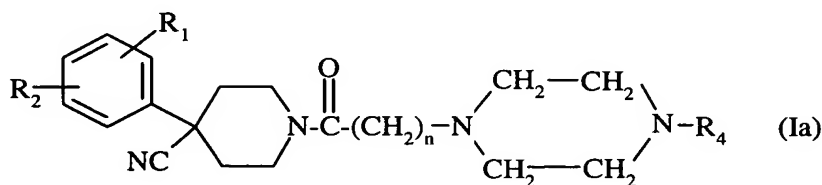
Claim 5. (Currently amended): ~~Process for preparing compounds of formula (I)~~ A process for preparing a compound according to Claim 1 in which  $\text{R}_3$  represents a group  $-\text{CH}_2\text{NR}_{12}\text{R}_{13}$  in which  $\text{R}_{12}$  and  $\text{R}_{13}$  each represent hydrogen, ~~characterized in that:~~  
~~a3) wherein~~ a compound of formula (IIc) or (IId)



in which  $\text{R}_1$  and  $\text{R}_2$  are as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I) in Claim 1~~ and Hal represents a halogen atom, ~~preferably chlorine or bromine,~~ is reacted with a compound of formula (III)

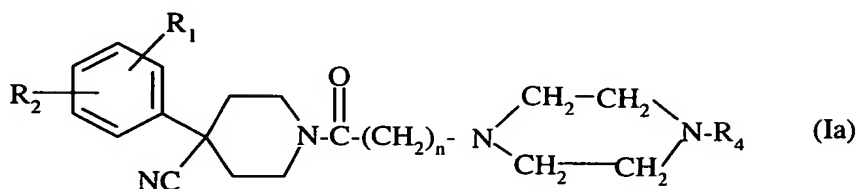


in which  $\text{R}_4$  is as defined ~~for a compound of formula (I) in Claim 1~~ to give a compound of formula (Ia)



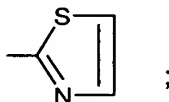
~~b3) and~~ the cyano group of the compound of formula (Ia) is reduced ~~to give a compound of formula (I) according to Claim 1 in which  $\text{R}_3 = \text{CH}_2\text{NH}_2$ .~~

Claim 6. (Currently amended): ~~Compound A~~ a compound of formula



in which:

- n is 1 or 2;
- R<sub>1</sub> represents a halogen atom; a trifluoromethyl radical; a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkyl; a (C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>4</sub>)alkoxy; or a trifluoromethoxy radical;
- R<sub>2</sub> represents a hydrogen atom or a halogen atom; and
  - R<sub>4</sub> represents the aromatic group 1,3-thiazol-2-yl of formula:



~~in the form of a base or an acid addition salt with an acid, or in the form of a hydrate or solvate thereof.~~

Claims 7-9 (Cancelled)

Claim 10. (New) A compound according to Claim 1 selected from the group consisting of:

- 1-[4-hydroxy-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;
- 2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-[4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-3,6-dihydro-1-(2*H*)-pyridinyl]-1-ethanone;
- 1-[4-(aminomethyl)-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;
- 1-[4-[4-chloro-3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-4-hydroxy-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;
- 1-[4-hydroxy-4-(3-methoxyphenyl)-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-

ethanone;

1-[4-hydroxy-4-(3-methylphenyl)-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;

1-[4-methoxy-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;

1-[4-hydroxy-4-[3-(trifluoromethoxy)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;

1-[4-[(dimethylamino)methyl]-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;

1-[4-[(methylamino)methyl]-4-[3-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1-piperidyl]-2-[4-(1,3-thiazol-2-yl)-1-piperazinyl]-1-ethanone;

or an acid addition salt, hydrate or solvate thereof.

Claim 11. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to Claim 1 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

Claim 12. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to Claim 2 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

Claim 13. (New) A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to Claim 10 together with a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

Claim 14. (New) A method for the treatment of central or peripheral neurodegenerative diseases; amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis; cardiovascular conditions; peripheral neuropathies; damage to the optic nerve and to the retina; spinal cord trauma and cranial trauma; atherosclerosis; stenoses; cicatrization; alopecia; cancers; tumours; metastases; leukaemias; chronic neuropathic and inflammatory pain; autoimmune diseases; bone fractures; bone diseases, which comprises administering to a patient in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to Claim 1.

Claim 15. (New) A method for the treatment of central or peripheral neurodegenerative diseases; amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis; cardiovascular conditions; peripheral neuropathies; damage to the optic nerve and to the retina; spinal cord trauma and cranial trauma; atherosclerosis; stenoses; cicatrization; alopecia; cancers; tumours;

metastases; leukaemias; chronic neuropathic and inflammatory pain; autoimmune diseases; bone fractures; bone diseases, which comprises administering to a patient in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to Claim 2.

Claim 16. (New) A method for the treatment of central or peripheral neurodegenerative diseases; amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, multiple sclerosis; cardiovascular conditions; peripheral neuropathies; damage to the optic nerve and to the retina; spinal cord trauma and cranial trauma; atherosclerosis; stenoses; cicatrization; alopecia; cancers; tumours; metastases; leukaemias; chronic neuropathic and inflammatory pain; autoimmune diseases; bone fractures; bone diseases, which comprises administering to a patient in need of such treatment a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to Claim 10.